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Board to receive briefing from Department of Health on new federal recommendations for fluoride levels

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Board of Health will receive a briefing at its June meeting from the state Department of Health on the new federal recommendations on drinking water fluoridation, which were released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in April.

The state Board of Health has initiated rulemaking to adjust the state's rule, and will work with the Department of Health to update the rule over the next year. Meanwhile, the department's Office of Drinking Water is advising community water systems to keep fluoride at the low end of the current operational range. The new HHS recommendation replaces the 1962 Drinking Water Standards and was made based on the fact that Americans today have more access to fluoride, from such sources as toothpaste and mouth rinses, than in the past.

Additional topics on the June agenda include an update by the Department of Health on the anencephaly investigation; a petition for rulemaking on bed and breakfast operations; and an update from Dr. Harvey Crowder, Administrator for the Walla Walla Community Health Department, who will discuss the regional support it provides to local agencies and organizations in the area.

The board is in the early stages of its strategic planning and invites public comment to suggest future priorities. The board will meet from 9 a.m. to 3:35 p.m. on Thursday, June 18 at the Marcus Whitman Hotel and Conference Center in Walla Walla.

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The board's mission is to provide statewide leadership in advancing policies that protect and improve the public's health. It does this by reviewing and monitoring the health status of all people in Washington; analyzing policies, providing guidance, and developing rules; promoting system partnerships; and encouraging public engagement in the public health system. For more information, visit the [Board of Health website](http://sboh.wa.gov/) (sboh.wa.gov/).